

Tidy Towns Competition 2009

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Millstreet** Ref: **480**
County: **Cork(North)** Mark: **284**
Category: **C** Date(s): **10/06/2009**
21/07/2009

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2009
Overall Development Approach	50	42
The Built Environment	50	36
Landscaping	50	39
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	28
Litter Control	50	34
Waste Minimisation	20	11
Tidiness	30	24
Residential Areas	40	30
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	32
General Impression	10	8
TOTAL MARK	400	284

Overall Development Approach:

Thank you for the entry form and all the supporting material and the map of the town was wonderful. I note you have 16 members and there is great commitment from the members who meet every second Wednesday, and I see you are getting help from the town people. It is positive to find that you are getting co-operation from and support from Cork County Council, IRD, Fás and all the local business people. The monthly parish newsletter is an excellent way of getting your message across to the community at large. I notice you have your column in the newsletter. It is very worthwhile, as you do, to engage with the local schools. I note you find your experiences of the competition to be very good and this is positive. The international horse show every August is a wonderful social occasion for Millstreet, but it is also an important national event. All of this means that you have a very good overall development approach.

The Built Environment:

I understand that your committee do not have a lot of control in the built environment, but I trust you take keen interest in planning matters and make your views known to the relevant authorities. I appreciate that much of the improvements of towns of the size of Millstreet are related to developments and infra structural works under the control of the statutory bodies.

There is an impressive display of the older style traditional shop fronts around the town centre and the standard of presentation of them is quite good. I admired Noel C Duggan's business premises which is recessed nicely back from the street and I noticed there is a huge amount of work going on in the church at the top of the hill and congratulations to the local community for funding this extensive amount of work. I admired the Bush bar, the two chemists shops and McCarthy's bar. The Boston bar looked very impressive. The Bank of Ireland is an imposing cut-stone building and sported some colourful window boxes of flowers. Supervalu is very tastily laid out and nicely recessed back from the street. It is somewhat unfair to mention some places over others, but I am merely giving a flavour of the town.

Landscaping:

Drishane cemetery is a very well kept place – well done. There is a great array of landscaping of varying types on the Mallow road starting at the signpost for Millstreet that blends decoratively with all those great trees and this gives a great welcoming effect to the town. I liked the new trees that are planted and I noticed that St Mary's cemetery is expertly landscaped and a well kept place – well done. Continuing on towards the town centre I admired the small walled off shrubberies with trees and they give a great visual impact. At the crossroads in this area some bright splashes of colour are evident. In the town centre some attractive hanging baskets are noticed and there are also some impressive tubs of flowers and shrubs. There are a number of trees along the main street that appear to have been cut back and have a bare look to them, but the trees up along to the church looked much better and enhance the aesthetics of the area. The baskets of flowers on the bridge were most attractive. I admired the spectacular green fencing, down near the arena, on top of the wall, which is modern, but has a secure and clean appearance. Some houses out past the arena and school entrance had tasteful landscaping and displayed a plough and a water pump and are a testament to bygone days, and the public landscaping in this area is impressive. That school premises (no Name to be seen) near the arena is attractively landscaped and looked supreme with spacious lawns, trees and hedging. The entrance to the Green Glens arena had fine displays of shrubs that were most attractive. There are some splendid walls on the road out to the industrial estate, and this great picnic area was put in place by Millstreet TidyTown and Tourism association in 1999. The industrial estate is adorned with great landscaping that really softens the visual impact of the large buildings and the trees filter the air of some pollution. Further out past the industrial estate one comes across the beautiful grotto that nestles peacefully there. The arched gateway erected in 2007 looks great in your brochure and well done to Connie and Roger for the quality of the workmanship, but it is tremendous to see it in reality. The children's playground is a great facility and it was good to see young children enjoying themselves in the outdoors. The GAA and soccer pitch are surrounded by a great spread of suitable trees and I was glad to hear that the GAA are improving their pitch by sanding it. On the Cullen road there were some fine tubs of shrubs and down further outside the council yard the area was spectacularly colourful with appropriate trees and shrubs and in this area the colour was bolstered with some wild flowers. I admired the freshly painted Grotto on the entrance to the town from the Macroom side and it was quite ornate with shrubs and flowers. The picnic area nearby is great and gives a welcoming effect to the town coming from Macroom.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

I admired the signpost, on the Macroom road, Kilmeedy ways to follow on Leader land, which gives details of the fox, O'Sullivan Beara route, the river Finnow, damsel and dragon flies, Kilmeedy castle, the cuckoo spit and the badger. I visited Clara road wildlife park and admired the sculpture of the fish erected by Millstreet TidyTowns and Tourism Association in 2007, it is a most unusual feature and set in well in the grassed area. It was a wonderful experience to walk along this area by the side of the river and listen to the water lapping along. Some lovely garden seats are in place here. I inspected the Millstreet wildlife poster which is very tastily put together giving details of all the birds and animals that frequent the area, and also details of the butterfly and moth.

Litter Control:

Some litter was on some of the approach roads especially down by Clara wildlife park, but not much in fairness. And other bits and pieces were noted on the approach to the sports fields. In general the control of litter is quite good in your area. Therefore, your weekly clean ups are showing the litter to be fairly well under control. Well serviced litter bins are dispersed around the town.

Waste Minimisation:

The recycling centre is a most impressive depot, and was busy while I was there. It is a very well constructed depot and most impressively landscaped outside secluding it off well. The yard was spotlessly clean with all those great bins. It was great to see the green flag proudly flying outside the schools. This is a great start for the young people of the town. I was delighted to see a composting container in Clara Wood that contained clippings and other suitable material.

Tidiness:

The town was presented in a fairly tidy condition. The necessary works at the church disrupt that area slightly, but this work is carried out in a responsible fashion. The cables underground are a splendid situation and really show off the town. The level of weed control is good.

Residential Areas:

McCarthy's estate is a very good estate, complimented well by the landscaping done by the tidy towns. I had to ask for the name of this estate as I could not find a nameplate. There is a small housing estate recessed

back from the road near the recycling centre similar to retirement homes and here again there could be a nameplate put on the estate. Ard An Aonaigh has spectacular entrance, there is an arrangement of fine houses and the area is well landscaped. Tanyard Wood is a substantial housing estate, with good traffic controlling measures and excellent landscaping and fantastic green areas. It is well planted with a variety of suitable trees and hedging. I liked the finger signposting. There is a great pride of place about this estate as I observed some of the local people working in a group digging and planting. There is a huge spread of private housing around the town that had impressive displays of shrubs, trees, flowers and lawns. The traditional town houses blend well with the shops and offices and are picturesque.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

All the approach roads are in great condition with secure fencing and a lot of traditional stone walls. The signposts were clean and distinct. The road needs resurfacing outside the Grotto on the Macroom road, and at the side of the road on the Mallow road there were some potholes. I noticed the back areas of the town are well developed. The festooned bridge is wonderful.

General Impression:

I could see the "footprints" of an imaginative and progressive people in the wonderful state of your town and those plaques for the different projects are testament to the great work that has been done over the years. When the time comes this town can be handed over to the new generation in such fine condition and you can be justly proud, but I hope this committee stays intact for many years to come. Just one impression I carried away from Millstreet is that I was unable to get accommodation of two consecutive nights in early June."

Second Round Adjudication:

Millstreet will be forever famous for its starring role in Eurovision of some years ago. The Flag wall commemorating that great occasion needs to be repaired and repainted. The then venue, The Green Glen Arena, was well presented during our visit. All roads were well swept and there was an agreeable absence of litter throughout. Adequate litter bins were to be seen. Many polls were noted, but no flags were flying. The flying of flags is one of the least expensive enhancements one can recommend, bringing colour and movement to the scene in an instance

The five infill houses on the Killarney Road have integrated well in this setting. The work done following your lengthy campaign to transform the former derelict garage site is applauded. Equally the 'dry fill' stone wall to the front of Tanyard Wood Estate was admired. Hopefully, the damage to the wall between there and Woodland Drive will be put to rights shortly. Good to see the kerbstones being revelled again, their former blue and yellow painting was the finishing touch. Is this intended again?

The boundary wire fence at the School beyond Green Glen looks somewhat stark. Are there plans to plant hedging along here? In the meantime, please secure the bottom fencing at the commencement, which has been used, it appears, as an unofficial 'short-cut' access. The town park, a focal point of your attention was excellently displayed on the day of adjudication.